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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Lithuanians)
SUBJECT Information Concerning Refugees/Deportations

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1. In Lithuania refugees are envied. The people reproach themselves for not having followed their example. The opinion is that regardless of their fate, it is always more desirable than that of the kolkhoz worker or of a slave in the USSR. Many women with children have been left behind by their husbands who have had the opportunity to escape; they are however, happier in the knowledge that their husbands are safe and often, perhaps, in the US than in fearing continually that they might be arrested or that they might be sent to Siberian prison camps in which case their own deportation with their children would follow. It is indeed difficult for a woman left alone to bring up her children in present-day conditions, but such a situation is still preferable to deportation to Siberia. These women are not too concerned when they are told that the exact location of their husbands is not known or if they succeed in obtaining a plausible explanation of their disappearance.

2. The last deportations [redacted] took place in September and October of 1951. The deportees (among them five [redacted] students) were taken by rail to Yenissei, where some continued on floating rafts (siellai in Lithuanian). [redacted] certain of these poorly-made rafts fell apart so that the passengers and their baggage fell into glacial waters. There might have been many drowned. The survivors lost everything. The only thing that they had left was the clothing that they wore. [redacted] most of the deportees resigned themselves to signing a request for voluntary departure, for in this way they were permitted to take with them food and clothing, whereas, in any case of resistance, deportees were forbidden to take with them whatever they might have had.

[redacted] the mentality of many Lithuanians. Having heard of Siberia, and having been menaced by the thought of it, they fear it less now -- At least, there, one no longer fears anything or anybody. There are no more threats.

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